I am very disturbed that the FCC is so willing to give my fair-use rights away.

I am not going to pirate material that is broadcasted on digital TV and neither are the vast majority of people out there. (Why should they - it's available on broadcast anyway!) Further, this broadcast flag will NOT prevent serious mass piracy; those professional pirates will easily circumvent this. All it will do is make it inconvenient for everyday people to exercise their current fair use rights with the new technology. And the reason the companies want this is simple - it is not to prevent piracy, it is to try to hold on to their existing business model and try to force the genie back in the bottle, instead of doing the free-market thing and adapting to the new environment. This translates to 'forcing' citizens to watch commercials, preventing them from doing things which the Supreme Court has already ruled quite within fair use rights - eg, timeshifting and making personal copies of broadcast programming, and so on.

You're trying to legislate profits and protection of a business model that may be failing to work. This is NOT the mark of a free-market capitalist society. Just because a business model worked in the past does not mean it inherently deserves to continue to be profitable in a changing environment, and it CERTAINLY does not mean that it should have legislative protection to survive when it has failed to evolve and adapt. That's just NOT the American way that we are trying to encourage the whole world to adopt.

The FCC says it is doing this to encourage the broadcasters to move to DTV. I thought that was already a requirement, why do we now need to 'sweeten the pot' for them?

To be frank, this seems like a straightforward stripping of consumer fair use rights as a plum to enable the broadcasters to make more money. MY government should be acting to protect MY existing rights, not to trade them away so that I can give more of MY money to a few corporations.

Of course these same corporations give the Republicans (and the Democrats, let's be fair, but this is a Republican FCC administration) a lot more money than I do, so it's clear who is calling the shots here.

I beg, implore, and demand you show some backbone on behalf of American citizens. It is not too late to do the right thing.